

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)
2007 Annual Report to Congress on
Implementation of Public Law 106-107

During this annual reporting period, NSF continues to remain an active and engaged partner in Public Law 106-107-related Federal-wide efforts. NSF's commitment to this partnership is demonstrated by the many and recurring number of leadership roles NSF staff have continued to play in many Federal-wide groups, as well as the participation of several staff members in interagency working groups responsible for streamlining the Federal grant process. Such leadership is present in many areas of the grants streamlining and simplification process including: the PL 106-107 Working Groups, the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council's Grants Policy Committee, Grants.gov, the Grants Management Lines of Business, the National Science and Technology Council's Research Business Models Subcommittee, and the Federal Demonstration Partnership. We envision that this commitment and dedication to fundamental change will continue over the coming year. The following highlights NSF accomplishments during the reporting period.

I. Overview

Total number of grant programs awarded and dollar value (break out discretionary & mandatory):

NSF posted a total of 140 funding opportunities (or 100%) in Grants.gov. The associated dollar value for those programs is \$6.739B.

Participation in interagency work groups, Grants Executive Board, etc.

NSF participated in the inter-agency workgroups listed below. Where applicable, participation by Foundation staff in relevant subcommittees also is identified:

- **Chief Financial Officer's Council, Grants Policy Committee**
Committee Chair
- **Federal Funding Accountability & Transparency Act (FFATA)**
FFATA Grants Committee (Co-chair)
FFATA SF 424 Forms Working Group (Co-chair)
FFATA Subaward Working Group
- **Grants.gov**
Grants Executive Board
Research & Related Subcommittee (Chair)
Grants.gov User Group
Grants.gov Stakeholders Meetings
- **PL 106-107 PreAward Work Group**
Deadline Date Working Group
Trafficking Working Group
- **PL 106-107 PostAward Work Group**
Reporting Forms Team
- **PL 106-107 Audit Oversight Work Group**
Audit Policy Workgroup (Co-Chair)
Federal Audit Clearinghouse Workgroup (Co-Chair)
- **PL 106-107 Training and Oversight Work Group:**
Training Curriculum Team (Chair)

- **Grants Management Line of Business (Co-Managing Partner)**
 GMLoB Consortia Lead Meetings
 Selected as one of the 3 OMB-approved Consortia Lead Agencies
- **Committee on Science, Research Business Models Subcommittee**
 Research Terms and Conditions Working Group (Chair)
 Research Progress Reports Working Group (Chair)
 Recognition of Multiple Principal Investigators (PIs)
 Sub-Recipient Monitoring Working Group
 Conflict of Interest Working Group
- **Federal Demonstration Partnership**
 Executive Committee
 Membership Standing Committee (Chair)
 Terms and Conditions Standing Committee (Chair)
 Electronic Research Administration Standing
 Committee (Co-chair)
 Strategic Planning Committee
 Phase V Implementation Committee

II. Grants.gov

Number and percent of grant announcements posted in Grants.gov

In FY 2007, NSF posted a total of 140 funding opportunities (or 100%) in Grants.gov.

Number and percent of grant programs available for electronic application through Grants.gov

In FY 2007, 136 of NSF's funding opportunities were available for submission via Grants.gov. A total of 4 opportunities were not available for submission via Grants.gov, as these opportunities included requirements that were not supported by the Grants.gov system.

Number and percent of grant applications received electronically via Grants.gov

In FY 2007, NSF received 44,594 total grant applications via Grants.gov and FastLane. Of these, 1,606 (3.6%) were submitted electronically via Grants.gov.

Number of grant announcement and application sites/systems eliminated due to Grants.gov usage

NSF encourages applicants to utilize Grants.gov to find funding opportunities, as well as submit applications, while continuing to offer applicants the option of using NSF's FastLane system. It has not been possible to broadly mandate use of Grants.gov as the system does not currently support all of NSF's submission requirements, such as separately submitted collaborative proposals, or letters of reference.

Since January 2006, NSF has worked with Grants.gov and other agencies in developing an approach for the submission of collaborative proposals through Grants.gov. These proposals involve simultaneous submission of multiple proposals from different organizations, with each organization requesting a separate award.

In addition, NSF's fellowship programs require submission of separately submitted letters of reference on behalf of a fellowship applicant. These letters of reference must be electronically linked to the application, and are an important component of the fellow's application package. Grants.gov has recently formed a fellowship working group to develop the system requirements necessary to address this need and NSF is an active participant in this new working group.

Number and percent of grant applications received via other options (paper, agency system, etc.) and explanation for why these options are still available (agency does not mandate Grants.gov APPLY, applicant cannot submit via Grants.gov, etc.)

In FY 2007, 44,594 grant applications were submitted to NSF via Grants.gov and FastLane. Of these, 96.4% were submitted via NSF's FastLane system. NSF continues to utilize FastLane as a proposal acceptance mechanism because Grants.gov does not yet support collaborative proposals or applications that mandate submission of letters of reference. It should also be noted that FastLane includes grants management functionality well beyond the Find and Apply capabilities provided by Grants.gov, such as proposal file updates and revised preaward budgets.

Training and outreach for Grants.gov users (agencies and grantees)

NSF conducted extensive external outreach, including bi-annual regional conferences throughout the US, to PIs and officials of sponsored projects offices and business offices, on proposal and award processes, including electronic initiatives such as Grants.gov. NSF has conducted over 25 of these conferences, reaching several thousand research administrators and PIs.

NSF also has conducted focused outreach programs to different institution types. This reporting period, NSF conducted a webcast for Hispanic Serving Institutions and dedicated a plenary session to NSF integration with Grants.gov (<http://www.yorkmedia.com/nsf/index.html>).

NSF regularly participated in conferences conducted by professional societies such as the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) and the Society of Research Administrators (SRA), including their annual regional meetings throughout the US, with events in Utah, Rhode Island, Hawaii, Tennessee and Puerto Rico, to name but a few. These events are excellent venues for discussing upcoming or pending streamlining initiatives, as well for soliciting input and obtaining reactions to how well such changes will be received by our customer communities.

Outreach efforts to grant community & internal outreach

In addition to the outreach noted above, NSF's Division of Information Systems participated in 19 Grants.gov outreach events (a total of 47 days) requiring travel to various locations throughout the United States and Canada, including representation at events in Puerto Rico, California, Mississippi, Texas, North Carolina, Alabama, Rhode Island, and New Mexico.

NSF also routinely worked with the following organizations to brief the community about current and future integration plans on both Grants.gov and GMLOB:

- Federal Demonstration Partnership
- National Council of University Research Administrators
- Society of Research Administrators International
- Council on Governmental Relations
- National Grants Partnership
- Grants.gov Research & Related Subcommittee

With regard to internal outreach, policy and IT staff continued to provide pertinent information to NSF staff throughout the reporting period on the Foundation's integration plans and strategy with Grants.gov.

Cost savings achieved through use of Grants.gov (refer to cost savings data collected/submitted in response to OMB memo M-06-22)

In FY 2007, NSF received 1,606 electronic applications through Grants.gov, more than double the amount submitted via Grants.gov in FY 2006. NSF recognizes the benefits that Grants.gov provides to

the research community through use of standardized terminology, application forms and electronic submission processes. NSF has leveraged Grants.gov in the development of five agency-specific forms (of which only 2 are required) and has used them 100% of the time; NSF uses government-wide forms 100% of the time for its application packages.

Assurance that application packages for all competitive grant opportunities were posted in Grants.gov FIND or a description of competitive announcements that were not posted (name of program, MMIYY exemption from posting was granted, reason for exemption, etc.)

As stated above, NSF published 140 or 100% of its funding opportunities in Grants.gov during FY 2007.

III. Grants Management Line of Business (GMLoB) (Response below covers the following topics:)

Status of agency participation in GMLoB

Description of proposed/approved IT solution

Progress achieved in developing baseline assessment of internal grant systems and functional requirements

Internal processes that were reengineered or streamlined in anticipation of future migration

If Consortium Lead, discuss progress in developing partnerships with Migrating Agencies

Benefits realized such as non-monetary benefits

NSF is one of three consortia lead agencies selected by OMB. NSF's solution, Research.gov, provides high-value grants management services to meet the specific needs of the research community and of research grant-making agencies and programs. Research.gov enables research organizations and grantees to access a menu of grants management services for multiple federal agencies in one location. Services available in the Fall 2007 release include:

- Grant Application Status - allows Sponsored Projects Officers (SPOs) and PIs to check the up-to-date status of grant applications submitted to partner agencies, and view a history of their submissions. The service allows users to search and sort applications by multiple fields (e.g., agency, tracking number, and received date) and view panel reviews (if applicable and a principal investigator on the grant application);
- Research Spending and Results - a service to fully disclose research grant award data from NSF and partner agencies in compliance with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. Also includes data elements that are not required by the legislation but that are relevant to the research community, including the award abstract and publication citations. As data and interface standards are finalized for USASpending.gov, NSF will offer partner agencies automated reporting of data;
- Policy Library - consolidates Federal-wide and agency-specific policies, guides, terms and conditions, and instructions that applicants and federal agencies need to conduct grants business;
- Research Headlines - the public will be able to view highlighted research activities from NSF and partner agencies; and
- Single Access Portal - to conduct grants management business with Federal research grant-making agencies. Users will automatically be shown the information and services relevant to their role.

In September 2007, NSF initiated a pilot with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) to offer a grant application status functionality.

Fifty research institutions are participating in the pilot and providing feedback that will be used to further improve service. The research community has been enthusiastic about being able to view the status of NSF and CSREES grant applications using the same website.

Research.gov benefits applicants and grantees by:

- Reducing the administrative burden on grantees via adoption of common reports and tools;
- Helping researchers manage their grants portfolio;
- Simplifying the community's access to information and grant services for multiple agencies;
- Facilitating timely notification of the award review process and decisions; and
- Providing modern online capabilities for conducting business with federal research agencies.

Research.gov benefits Federal research agencies by:

- Providing a menu of services allowing agencies to complement existing agency grants management functions and systems;
- Helping avoid costs of developing and implementing online grants management services; and
- Supporting Federal agencies' efforts to promote the common research mission.

Through its partnership with NSF and Research.gov, CSREES has been able to offer its applicants online access to status information on applications. This is a capability CSREES had not previously offered.

Reduction in the number of agency grants management systems (provide names of systems and estimated costs savings)

As one of three Grants Management Line of Business consortia leads, NSF will leverage its FastLane capabilities, experience and expertise to deliver an integrated web portal for grantees to conduct business with federal agencies. FastLane services and information will be migrated to Research.gov and be made available for other agencies' use over time.

IV. Debarment and Suspension

Date agency published a nonprocurement debarment-suspension regulation in a new agency chapter in Subtitle B of 2 CFR

NSF published its nonprocurement debarment/suspension regulation in chapter XXV of title 2 of the CFR on February 2, 2007.

Date agency removed its codification of the common rule from its own CFR title so that the OMB guidance and all agency implementing regulations on nonprocurement debarment and suspension are located in 2 CFR

NSF removed its codification of the common rule from NSF's title (title 45) February 2, 2007.

V. Agency Commitment to Future Involvement with Government-wide Grants Initiatives

NSF is committed to continuing our leadership in the federal grants management community through 2007 and beyond. NSF will ensure that the federal solution for grants management incorporates the specific requirements of the research grantee community, leveraging proven functionality and expertise where possible. We will continue to apply our expertise in grants management systems and processes as the Research.gov portal and initial set of services are deployed in 2008. As a GMLoB Consortium Lead, NSF will also strive to establish and maintain strong service provider/customer partnerships based on the delivery of quality service to the grantee community.